

William Poeschel House
(Harrison Hill)

HABS No. MO-258

HABS
MO,
37-HERM
6-

2 miles west on gravel extension of West Tenth Street
Hermann Vicinity
Gasconade County
Missouri

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D. C. 20240

HABS
MO,
37-HERM.Y
6-

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

WILLIAM POESCHEL HOUSE (HARRISON HILL)

HABS No. MO-258

Location: 2 miles west on gravel road extension of West Tenth Street, Hermann vicinity, Gasconade County, Missouri.

Present Owner: Mr. and Mrs. William Harrison, RFD 1, Hermann, Missouri.

Present Occupant: Mr. and Mrs. William Harrison.

Significance: Harrison Hill was originally the home and winery of William Poeschel. A brother of Michael Poeschel, owner of Stone Hill Winery, he built this two-and-a-half story, L-shaped house in 1869, the year that the main building of Stone Hill Winery was built. It is possible that these buildings are the work of the same architect.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1869. This information comes from an interview with Mrs. William Harrison, who obtained the date from William Poeschel's daughter before her death. This date is confirmed by County Tax Records.
2. Architect: Not known.
3. Original and subsequent owners: The William Posechel House is constructed on the southeast quarter of the southeast quarter of the northwest quarter of Section 34, Township 46, Range 5 west, Gasconade County, Missouri. The following references to the title of this land are recorded in the Gasconade County, Missouri Deed Books and Probate Records.

1850 Warranty Deed Michael Poeschel and Caroline his wife to William Poeschel
Date signed: August 15, 1850
Date filed: August 16, 1855
Book L Page 126
Consideration: \$100.00

1863 Warranty Deed Michael Poeschel and Catherina his wife to William Poeschel
Date signed: November 5, 1863
Date filed: May 19, 1881
Book 8 Page 62
Consideration: \$1.00 deed made in part consideration of a former conveyance August 15, 1850, in which the description was defective.

- 1869 Last Will William Poeschel to Theodora Poeschel his wife
Date signed: July 31, 1869
Book 18 Page 19
- 1891 Warranty Deed Theodora Poeschel to Richard Poeschel
Date signed: April 1, 1891
Date filed: April 1, 1891
Book 15 Page 423
Consideration: \$5,900.00
- 1952 Warranty Deed Richard Poeschel to August Hans
Date signed: February 26, 1919
Date filed: February 26, 1919
Book 47 Page 489
Consideration: \$5,000.00
- 1952 Warranty Deed Amanda Hans, widow of August Hans to William Harrison and wife
Date signed: May 12, 1952
Date filed: May 15, 1952
Book 87 Page 397
Consideration: \$1.00 and other good and valuable considerations

4. Original plans and construction: No original plans or written accounts of the construction of the William Poeschel House have been located. An undated early photograph of the house is owned by Mr. and Mrs. William Harrison. The photograph shows the original two story portico with its elaborate scrolled wooden brackets and balcony railing. This portico was removed, leaving only the pediment, before the Harrisons purchased the house in 1952. They replaced it with a simpler portico. The house retains its original character despite numerous minor alterations.
5. Alterations and additions: The original wooden shingle roof is now covered with bent seam sheet metal. The date of the addition can not be ascertained.

The Harrisons restored the house between 1952 and 1954. The following alterations were made by them in the course of restoring the house.

Basement: The original basement stairs were found to be too steep and were removed and replaced. In the northwest room of the basement an exterior entrance was altered. Steps were put in to replace an original ramp. The ground level cellar door, which opened upwards, was removed, and a door was placed in the arched opening in the basement wall. A frame addition creates a storage area in

the west corner of this room. In the southeast room of the basement, the ceiling was reinforced with an I beam. An arched niche in the southwest wall of this room originally had doors and shelves, both removed by the Harrisons. This may originally have been an entrance similar to the one in the northwest room. This conclusion is supported by the fact that the back of the niche is brick rather than limestone like the other basement walls. The wine cellar, northeast of this room, has not been altered. The original earth floors are covered with poured concrete.

First floor: The alterations to the first floor are more extensive than those to the basement. Beginning with the northwest room, at the rear of the L, which was and still is the kitchen, the alterations are as follows: Three windows grouped under one lintel were placed in the northwest wall of the kitchen. In the partition between the kitchen and the room immediately to the southwest of it, now the family room, an off center single door has been removed and replaced with a double door centered in the wall. The original door was northeast of the present opening. The fireplace in the family room was added. The floor comes from the attic and covers two other floors. The secondary entrance hall southwest of the family room is a copy of the original. The living room southwest of the hall is as it was originally. The wooden curtain boards were found in the attic. They have been painted; but, when found, they were hand-grained, indicating that the entire room, perhaps the entire house, was trimmed with hand-grained woodwork. Northeast of the living room is the main entrance hall. It was originally connected to the secondary entrance hall forming an L-shaped passageway. A bathroom, placed in the corner of the L, now separates the two halls. The main entrance is original except for the door, which is a replacement for the damaged original. In the bedroom northeast of the main entrance hall, a partition, running southwest to the northeast dividing the room in half, has been removed. Three windows under one lintel placed in the northeast wall of the bedroom were added.

Second floor: The northwest room, originally a dancehall, is now a game room. The fireplace in this room is an addition. In order to accomodate the fireplace, the door was moved to the northeast. In the southwest bedroom, closets and a bathroom were added. The door joining the bathroom and the hall is an addition.

Attic: Part of the floor has been removed for use in the family room. A partition has been erected.

Exterior: Two of the exterior doors are partially original. They were sawn in half, the bottom part was retained and the top was replaced with a nine light window panel. Thus, two of the exterior doors are Dutch doors.

The main entrance, on the southeast, originally had an elaborate two story, three bay portico, with a second floor balcony all of wood. The railing of the balcony and the brackets at the top of the columns were elaborately scrolled. The porch has been simplified in the Harrisons' restoration project. All that remained when they purchased the house was the pedimented top of the portico. It is now supported by four plain square columns. The balcony was not restored to its original appearance. In its place is an iron balcony from one of Hermann's early houses.

A two story porch with scrolled woodwork similar to that on the original main entrance ran along the inside of the L at one time. It has been restored in the same simple style as the main entrance. The second level has been left out. The exterior door in the second floor hall now opens onto another iron balcony from an early Hermann building. The patio in the L, originally brick, has been repaved in the same material.

The original shutters have been removed and replaced with stationary aluminum shutters.

B. Historical Context:

William Poeschel was the brother of Michael Poeschel, owner of Stone Hill Winery. The Poeschel family was very important to the settlement of Hermann through their development of the wine industry.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural Character: The William Poeschel House is a brick building in a vernacular "L" plan, two stories tall with a distinguished front portico.
2. Condition of fabric: Excellent.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: Front section: 22'3" x 44'2"
Rear wing: 24'4" x 35'0"
2. Foundations: Continuous limestone ashlar walls.
3. Wall construction: 13" thick brick walls, laid in common bond, run the height of the building and are corbelled out two courses at the cornice.
4. Structural system: Brick perimeter bearing walls form the outside structure. Three 8" interior brick bearing walls rest on stone foundations in the basement. Floor joists are 2" x 10" sawn pine boards; rafters are 2" x 4" sawn boards mitred at the ridge with no ridge beam.

5. Porches: A two-story wooden portico with a pedimented roof supported by four square columns stands over the main entrance. A two-story L-shaped porch, supported by five wooden columns fits in the ell of the house. A second-story cast iron balcony (not original) is cantilevered from the wall under each porch. Cut stone steps lead up to a brick paved front stoop.
6. Chimneys: A brick interior end chimney on either side of the front section (flues are hidden within the walls); inside brick chimney in the rear wing at the ridge.
7. Openings:

- a. Doors and doorways: The front door is flanked by a six-light transom and three-light sidelights. Two of the four-panel doors on the north wall of the first floor rear wing are Dutch doors. The top sections have been replaced by nine-light panels. The original four-panel doors on the south and east sides have been replaced by newer six-panel doors.
- b. Windows: Brick segmental relieving arches cap rectangular six-over-six double hung windows. All windows have flat casings and trim. Windows on the first and second floors have stone sills; attic windows have wooden sills. All windows are shuttered (with S-shaped shutter stays) except those under the L-shaped porch. A lunette window is situated in the pediment of the front portico. The large windows with pedimented frames on two sides of the house are recent modifications. All doors, sashes and window and door casings are painted white.

8. Roof:

The gabled roofs over the front section and the rear wing are covered with corrugated metal sheets, painted green. Snow stoppers line the bottom edge of the roof. The cornices are simple two-board cornices. A pedimented portico crosses the gable of the main section.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans:

- a. Basement: Exterior access through arched double doors on the south wall. The full basement is divided into four sections by the stone foundation walls. Under the west half of the front section of the house is a stone arched wine cellar.
- b. First floor: The front door leads to a small anteroom which is flanked to the right by a bedroom and to the left by the living room. In the rear wing, beyond the living room, are a stair hall, a sitting room, and the kitchen-dining room.

- c. Second floor: The stairs on the north wall of the first-floor hallway lead to an L-shaped hall upstairs from which one enters the dance hall (in the rear wing) and two bedrooms opposite each other in the front section.
2. Stairways: An open-string walnut stairway connects the first and second floors. The newel post and balusters are turned; the bannister is a cyma shape with an eased oversailing at the bottom and a circular and newel return at the top. Stairs leading to the attic and the basement are simple open-string wooden stairs.
3. Flooring: Tongue-and-groove wide pine thresholds.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Plaster walls either painted or papered. Walls under the staircases are made of beaded vertical planks. The ceilings are all painted white.
5. Doorways and doors: Four-panel doors with flat fieldings. The tall three-panel double doors between the sitting room and the dining room are not original. Large double doors in the basement are beaded vertical plank with beaded Z-braces and are hung in arched brick openings.
6. Decorative features: A double cyma reversa molding is used for interior window trim. Carved wooden lintels cap the windows in the northeast bedroom and the window at the east end of the hall.
7. Heating: The bathrooms on the first and second floors, heating system and electric fixtures are all later additions.

D. Site:

1. General setting: The house sits atop a large hill overlooking the Missouri River. The setting is rural, and the house is surrounded by meticulously designed and maintained landscaping.
2. Outbuildings: A metal barn is situated near the house.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Primary and unpublished sources:

County Tax Records, 1854, 1866-1900, stored in a vault on the second floor, Gasconade County Courthouse, East First Street between Market and Schiller Streets, Hermann, Missouri.

Deeds, Office of the County Recorder of Deeds, Gasconade County Courthouse, East First Street between Market and Schiller Streets, Hermann, Missouri.

Probate Records, Office of the Probate Clerk, Gasconade County, Courthouse, East First Street between Market and Schiller Streets, Hermann, Missouri.

Interview, Mrs. William Harrison, August 12, 1975, date of construction, date of alterations

Prepared by: Nanette M. Linderer	and Clayton B. Fraser
Project Historian	Project Supervisor
Summer 1975	Summer 1975

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

The Hermann, Missouri, project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey, under the direction of John Poppeliers, Chief of HABS, with cooperation of Historic Hermann, Incorporated. Recording was carried out during the summer of 1975 by Clayton B. Fraser (HABS Washington Office), Project Supervisor; Nanette M. Linderer (University of Missouri at Columbia), Project Historian; and Student Architects Edward C. Freeman (Arizona State University), Jean C. Parker (Columbia University), and Donnie G. Seale (University of Florida). The photographs were taken in April and May 1983, by HABS/HAER Photographer Jet Lowe.